

West Virginia Writers' Project

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Chapter 3 - Section 1 & 2

Mt. Zion Baptist Church - (Colored) - Marlinton

This Baptist congregation was organized on Browns Mt. in 1879. This is the oldest Negro church in the county. Their services were held in an old abandoned log building that had been used for a school house. At this time a preacher by the name of Coleman Booze walked through from Virginia once each year and held services here.

The first members were:

Samuel Freeman

Mary & John Cunningham

James & Julia Harris

Titus & Violet Carter

Dave & Julia Brooks

Clay Massey

Agnes and William Massey

Jenny Massie,

Susan & Ben Graves

Tamar Stewart

William Miller

The church was reorganized in 1899 and the congregation thought of building a church building on Browns Mountain, but were advised against it by Rev. I. H. Goodwin, who had recently settled there and was teaching and preaching in the little negro settlement on Browns Mountain at the time.

The Rev. Goodwin knew that there would be no permanent

work here and that they would soon have to move.

Very soon some of the families moved to Marlinton where work might be had and the church was also moved.

The white people gave them the school house in Price Hollow and this they used for several years. From here they moved to an old frame building which stood against the hill opposite where the freight depot now stands.

In the year 1911, a lot was purchased from Uriah and Susan Bird, Lot 1 in the Birds Addition to the town of Marlinton, and deeded to George Gilmer, Jacob Robinson,
Quinnham, Trustees for the Mt. Zion Baptist Church. The deed states that at the time the deed was made, the church building had already been erected upon the lot.

The Rev. I. H. Goodwin and James Harris did most of the work of building the church.

The church was paid for by both colored and white people. The Rev. Goodwin, who gave most of this information, says that he preached at different places in Tucker and Randolph Counties and helped raise the money to pay for the church. He opened up the first bank account for the church and deposited every penny that he could raise, taking nothing for his own expenses. Rev. Goodwin has preached in this county for over forty years. He is one of the most highly respected colored citizens of the county. Besides preaching once a month at the Baptist church at Cass at the present time, he is janitor of the First National Bank Building. When he left the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, it was free from debt.

Rockwell County

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The pastors who have served this church are:

Rev. Coleman Boode
" J. D. Oliver
" Edwison Doggs
" Wm. Craney
" Wm. Kenny
" I. H. Goodwin
" Robert Allen
" C. J. Logan

The officers of the church are:

Deacon: J. C. Gilmore

Church Clerk - J. W. Tibbs

The membership of the church at the present time is about fifty persons.

There is a Sunday School all the year and the enrollment is about thirty-five.

The Supt. is - J. C. Gilmore

Teachers - Lina J. Knapper

Ida Barnes

Harriett Murray

Treasurer - J. C. Gilmore

Librarian - Richard Morris

The womens church society is called the "Charity Club" and the officers are:

Pres. - Mrs. Sarah Loving

Secy. - Harriett Murray

Rev. J. C. Logan is pastor at the present time.

for office: { Rev. I. H. Goodwin
{ Mrs. J. W. Tibbs